

REMARKS

Claims 1-4, 7-13, 15 and 16 are all the claims pending in the application. Of these claims, claims 7, 8, 10, 11, 13 and 16 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Yamamoto, et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,105,302) (hereinafter referred to as Yamamoto '302). Further, claims 7 and 8 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Yamamoto, et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,048,223) (herein after referred to Yamamoto '223). Still further, claims 1-4, 9, 12 and 15 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious over Yamamoto '223 in view of Wallace (U.S. Patent No. 3,778,916). Finally, claims 2 and 3 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Yamamoto '233 in view of Wallace as applied to claim 1, and further in view of Yamamoto '302.

On behalf of the Applicant, the undersigned would like to thank the Examiner for the courtesies extended in a telephonic interview conducted on May 17, 2007. In the interview, the undersigned presented a number of arguments as to why the pending claims patentably distinguish over the prior art. As a result of the arguments presented, the Examiner requested that the undersigned present these arguments in writing in a formal response. Thus, the undersigned repeats the arguments below.

With respect to independent claim 1, Applicant first argued that Yamamoto '223 does not teach or suggest a tubular transparent synthetic resin body which is integrally molded with the tubular body. Rather, members 13 and 14 of Yamamoto, et al. '223 are glued to member 12; they are not integrally molded together. This is an important distinction. As noted in the last response, Yamamoto, et al. '223 specifically states that elements 12 and 13 are fixedly bonded to each other. See, column 4, lines 20-23. The specification at page 13, lines 17-22 describes the advantage of the claimed invention (in which the resin body 16 is integrally molded with the

tubular body 17) over the arrangement disclosed in Yamamoto, et al. '223. Specifically, the specification states as follows:

Moreover, the synthetic resin body 16 is formed integrally with the outer side of the reinforced tubular body 17 by molding and the reinforced tubular body 17 is fixed to the rod pipe 12, whereby the synthetic resin seat body can be secured firmly to the rod pipe 12. Particularly since the resin seat body is not bonded to the reinforced body 17 but formed integrally with the reinforced tubular body 17 by molding, the reinforced tubular body 17 externally looks beautiful as seen from the outside of the transparent synthetic resin seat body 16.

Thus, the specification specifically distinguishes the claimed arrangement over that disclosed in Yamamoto, et al. '223 and highlights the advantage associated with the claimed invention.

In addition, Applicant submits that Yamamoto '223 fails to even teach or suggest a grip portion. Instead, the Examiner is reading element 13 on both the synthetic resin body and the grip portion of claim 1.

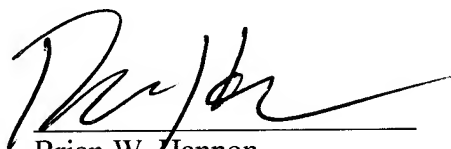
Finally, Applicant submits that Yamamoto, et al. '223 does not teach or suggest a concealing film disposed between the resin body and the grip portion.

With respect to independent claim 7, Yamamoto, '302 does not teach a synthetic resin body which is integrally molded with an outer side of the tubular body, as claim 7 also requires. Further, there is no support for the Examiner's assertion that the synthetic resin body includes a portion larger in thickness than the tubular body and made of a material softer than that of the tubular body. Finally, there is no support for the Examiner's assertion that Yamamoto, et al. '302 teaches that the reinforced tubular body extends in an axial direction longer than that of the synthetic resin body.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that the claims patentably distinguish over the prior art. It is therefore respectfully requested that the application be passed to issue at the earliest possible convenience. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,



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